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REMARKS

Claims 6 and 20 were previously cancelled. No new matter has been added. Thus, claims 1- 5, 7 - 19, and 21 - 24 remain pending in the present application. In view of the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable.

Claims 1 - 5, 7 - 19, and 21 - 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Binard (U.S. Pat. No. 4,142,525) in view of Crump (U.S. Pat. No. 6,227,200). The Examiner stated, in support of the rejection, that Binard shows the invention substantially as claimed except for the valve that permits fluid flow without impinging on the valve but that Crump shows such a valve.

Claim 1 recites a connector for injecting fluid to a catheter, comprising a "bypass element fluidly connected to the attachment portion, the bypass element being adapted to open *a valve of the catheter* to permit fluid to flow into the catheter without impinging on the valve" in combination with "an overpressure control element adapted to maintain a pressure of fluid within the connector below a predetermined threshold level."

The Examiner correctly stated that the Binard patent does not disclose the valve type that permits fluid to flow into the catheter without impinging the valve. (See 9/29/06 Office Action, p. 4). Specifically, the Binard patent does not disclose a "bypass element adapted to open *a valve of the catheter* to permit fluid to flow into the catheter without impinging on the valve," as recited in claim 1. The Examiner attempted to cure this deficiency with the Crump patent.

Initially it is noted that the catheter of Crump is directed to a mechanism for cleaning the tip of a catheter and that the catheter of Crump includes no valve. It is respectfully submitted that the valve 424 cited by the Examiner is located in a manifold which is received around the catheter 408 and that no valve is located in the catheter 408. Specifically, the manifold 404 shown in Figs. 5A-C includes a port 412d which receives a connector or adaptor 420 into which the catheter 408 is inserted. The valve 424 extends across the opening of the adaptor 420 and is forced open as the catheter 408 is inserted therethrough and which closes when the catheter 408 is withdrawn. (Specification, col. 11, lines 11 - 23). The catheter 408 includes no valve and, it is respectfully submitted, the system of Crump therefore includes no "bypass element fluidly connected to the attachment portion, the bypass element being adapted to open *a valve of the*

catheter to permit fluid to flow into the catheter without impinging on the valve,” as recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 1. Because claims 2 - 5 and 7 - 17 depend from and, therefore, include the limitations of claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable for at least the reasons stated above.

Independent claim 18 also includes limitations that distinguish over the Binard patent in view of the Crump patent in a manner substantially similar to the reasons stated above in regard to claim 1. Specifically, claim 18 recites “an elongated tube extending between a first end adapted for fluid connection to a power injector and a second end adapted for fluid connection to *a catheter including a valve in a proximal part thereof, the second end being insertable into the catheter beyond the valve thereof* so that fluid passes through the fluid coupler into the catheter to a distal end thereof without passing through the valve.” Thus, claim 18 recites a device for insertion into a catheter to open a valve in the catheter and it is respectfully submitted that neither Binard nor Crump either shows or suggests such an arrangement.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 18. Because claims 19 and 21 - 24 depend from and, therefore, include the limitations of claim 18, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable for at least the reasons stated above.

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CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the now pending claims are in condition for allowance. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, and an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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